



Courtesy of Utah State Historical Society

Robert Taylor Burton (1821–1907) played in the Nauvoo brass band, served as a missionary, and was a member of the Nauvoo Legion in Utah, a deputy to the territorial marshal, a member of the board of regents for the University of Deseret, and a member of the legislative body of Utah. He was bishop of the Fifteenth Ward in Salt Lake. In 1875 he was called to serve as a counselor in the Presiding Bishopric of the Church.

attempted to escape were imprisoned by Morris, causing their appeal to legal authorities for assistance. Chief Justice Kinney issued on 22 May for the release of the prisoners and the arrest of Morris main lieutenants. When Morris refused to obey and continued to announce his revelations, Kinney urged acting governor Frank Fuller to call out the militia as a posse to enforce the writs.

Robert T. Burton, chief deputy for the territorial marshal, led a company of 250 men to the bluffs south of Kington Fort early in the morning of 13 June. They sent a message to Morris demanding his surrender and compliance with the writ. Morris and his group assembled in a nearby bowery while Morris awaited a revelation. Impatient with the delay, Burton ordered two warning shots from a cannon to be fired over the fort. The second shot fell short, struck the plowed ground in front of the fort, ricocheted into the bowery where the Morrisites were assembled, and women were killed, and a young girl was seriously wounded. The fighting that erupted resulted in a three-day siege.

On the third day a white flag of truce appeared from inside the fort, and the fighting ceased. After demanding unconditional surrender, Burton and thirty militiamen entered the fort. Morris then asked the privilege of speaking to his people one more time. But instead of delivering a farewell address, he shouted, "All who are for me and my God, in life or in death follow me!" Whereupon a rush was made for the stacked rifles that had been gathered.⁷ Shots rang out, and Joseph Morris and John Banks, second in command, were killed. Ten Morrisites and two members of the Utah Legion were killed during the three days of fighting. Ninety Morrisite men were taken to Salt Lake City for trial on charges of murdering the two members and resisting due process of law. Seven of them were condemned but they were pardoned by Governor Harding. Most of the remaining Morrisites who wished to go were escorted by Connor's army to the Bear River Valley in Idaho Territory. Although the Church was not directly involved in this unfortunate affair, the reputation of the Church suffered in the East as a result.